

REMARKS

I. Status of the Claims

By this Amendment, claims 3, 15, 50 and 51 are amended. Claims 1, 4, 6-10, 12-14, 16, 18-22 and 24-48 were previously cancelled without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 5, 11, 15, 17, 23 and 49-51 are pending in this application.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 11, 15, 17, 23, 49, 50 and 51 are independent claims.

The Examiner indicated in the June 4, 2003 Office Action that claims 2, 5, 11, 17, 23 and 49 are allowed.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's citation of statutory authority as a basis for claim rejections.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 15, 50 and 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gasper et al (U.S.P. 5,278,943) in view of Swaminathan et al (U.S.P. 5,751,903).

Claim 3 is directed to a speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments. In the method, quantization code books are constructed using one or more speech segments stored in the speech database is encoded using one of the constructed quantization code books (S405 in Fig. 4), and the encoded speech segment is stored in the speech segment dictionary (S406 in Fig. 4).

According to the present invention, since the speech segment stored in the speech database is encoded using one of the constructed quantization code books constructed using the speech segments stored in the speech database, the speech segment can be efficiently encoded using the quantization code book.

Claim 15 is directed to a speech information processing method of decoding encoded speech segment stored in the speech segment dictionary, using the constructed quantization code books, and of synthesizing speech by using the speech segment dictionary which stores the speech segments, as claimed in claim 3.

Gaspar et al discloses to convert an input text to a list of segments by decomposing the text into its equivalent phonetic features and the segmentation data may be created and stored utilizing any desired encoding method. However, Gaspar does not teach or suggest constructing quantization code books using speech segments which are to be encoded. Further, Gaspar is silent on encoding the speech segment using the quantization code books which are constructed using speech segments to be encoded.

Therefore, the applicant submits that the invention of claims 3 and 15 is not taught or suggested by Gaspar.

Swaminathan et al discloses an encoding and decoding method for digitized speech signals by selectively utilizing backward prediction for the short-time predictor parameters and fixed codebook gain of a speech signal. However, Swaminathan does not teach or suggest constructing quantization code books using the speech segments which are to be encoded. Further, Swaminathan is silent on encoding the speech segment using the quantization code books which are constructed using speech segments to be encoded.

Therefore, the applicant submits that the present invention recited in claims 3 and 15 is not taught or suggested by Gaspar in view of Swaminathan.

Claims 50 and 51 are apparatus claims that correspond generally to method claims 3 and 15 respectively and are patentable for the same reasons.

III Request for Reconsideration

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance is requested. If a conference would assist in placing this application in better condition for allowance, the undersigned would appreciate a telephone call at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,
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